Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of selecting program patches for installation by human or machine patch recipients into a computer ~~systems~~ system, where the patches are organized into patch trees each having a root, the method comprising the steps of:

searching for a patch that corrects a particular defect or that has a particular property or both;

examining additional patches, if any, sharing the same patch tree as any such patch found as a result of the search and occupying a position on the shared patch tree between that of any such patch found and the root of the patch tree; ~~and~~

presenting one or more patches, including any such patch found and examined patches that satisfy one or more specified conditions determined by the nature of each patch and the identity of the patch recipient;

installing at least one of the one or more patches into the computer system by the patch recipient; and

running the at least one of the one or more patches on the computer system,

wherein at least one condition to be satisfied by presented patches is visibility to a given class of recipients.

2. (Currently Amended) A method of selecting patches in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least ~~one specified~~ another condition to be satisfied by presented patches is reliability adequate to the requirements or attributes or bath of a given patch recipient.

3. (Original) A method of selecting patches in accordance with claim 2 wherein any patch found is presented along with the patch closest to the root of the patch tree having the same or greater reliability to a recipient in need of highly reliable patches.

4. (Original) A method of selecting patches in accordance with claim 2 wherein any patch found and any patch closest to the root of the patch tree having acceptable reliability is presented to a recipient in need of patches having acceptable reliability.

5. (Canceled).

6. (Currently Amended) A method of selecting patches in accordance with claim [[5]] 1 wherein patch visibility is either "all" or "limited" or their equivalents.

7. (Original) A method of selecting patches in accordance with claim 6 wherein only some patch recipients are permitted to be presented with patches whose visibility is "limited."

8. (Currently Amended) A method of selecting patches ~~in accordance with claim 1~~ for installation by human or machine patch recipients into a computer system, where the patches are organized into patch trees each having a root, the method comprising the steps of:

searching for a patch that corrects a particular defect or that has a particular property or both;

examining additional patches, if any, sharing the same patch tree as any such patch found as a result of the search and occupying a position on the shared patch tree between that of any such patch found and the root of the patch tree;

presenting one or more patches, including any such patch found and examined patches that satisfy one or more specified conditions determined by the nature of each patch and the identity of the patch recipient;

installing at least of the one or more patches into the computer system by the patch recipient; and

running the at least one of the one or more patches on the computer system,

wherein at least one condition to be satisfied by presented patches is availability to a given class of patch recipients.

9. (Previously Presented) A method of selecting patches in accordance with claim 8 wherein the availability of patches is either "all" or "limited" or their equivalents.

10. (Original) A method of selecting patches in accordance with claim 9 wherein only some patch recipients are permitted to be presented with patches whose availability is "limited."

11. (Currently Amended) A method of selecting patches ~~in accordance with claim 1~~ for installation by human or machine patch recipients into a computer system, where the patches are organized into patch trees each having a root, the method comprising the steps of:

searching for a patch that corrects a particular defect or that has a particular property or both;

examining additional patches, if any, sharing the same patch tree as any such patch found as a result of the search and occupying a position on the shared patch tree between that of any such patch found and the root of the patch tree;

presenting one or more patches, including any such patch found and examined patches that satisfy one or more specified conditions determined by the nature of each patch and the identity of the patch recipient;

installing at least of the one or more patches into the computer system by the patch recipient; and

running the at least one of the one or more patches on the computer system,

wherein at least two specified conditions to be satisfied by presented patches are reliability adequate to the needs or desires of a given patch recipient and visibility to a given class of patch recipients.

12. (Previously Presented) A method of selecting patches in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least two specified conditions to be satisfied by presented patches are reliability adequate to the needs or desires of a given patch recipient and availability to a given class of patch recipients.

13. (Original) A method of selecting patches in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least two specified conditions to be satisfied by presented patches are visibility and availability to given classes of patch recipients.

14. (Original) A method of selecting patches in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least three specified conditions to be satisfied by presented patches are reliability adequate to the needs or desires of a given patch recipient, visibility to a given class of patch recipients, and availability to a given class of patch recipients.

15. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented patch selection system for aiding in the selection of program patches for installation into a computer ~~systems~~ system, where the patches are organized into patch trees each having a root, the system comprising:

a patch search mechanism which can search for and find an identifier for one or more patches that correct a particular defect or that have a particular property or both;

a patch tree examination mechanism which can examine patches identified by the search mechanism and additional patches, if any, sharing the same patch tree as any patch whose identifier is found by the search mechanism and occupying a position on the shared patch tree between the position of any patch whose identifier is found and the root of the shared patch tree; and

a patch presentation mechanism which can present one or more patches, including patches whose identifiers are found by the search mechanism and/or additional examined patches, said patches presented being those that the examination mechanism determines satisfy one or more specified conditions determined by the nature of each patch, said specified conditions being determined by characteristics or requirements or both of the computer system where the patches are to be installed,

wherein at least one condition to be satisfied by presented patches is visibility to a given class of patch recipients, where a recipient is a human or machine in a position to select and install patches on a given computer system.

16. (Original) A selection system in accordance with claim 15 wherein at least one specified condition to be satisfied by presented patches is reliability adequate to the needs of a given computer system.

17. (Original) A selection system in accordance with claim 16 wherein any patch whose identifier is found is presented along with the patch, if any, closest to the root of the same patch tree having the same or greater reliability, in the case of a computer system that needs highly reliable patches.

18. (Original) A selection system in accordance with claim 16 wherein any patch whose identifier is found is presented along with any patch, if any, closest to the root of the patch tree having acceptable reliability in the case of a computer system that needs acceptable patch reliability.

19. (Canceled).

20. (Currently Amended) A selection system in accordance with claim [[19]] 15 wherein the patch visibility of any patch is either "all" or "limited" or their equivalents.

21. (Original) A selection system in accordance with claim 20 wherein only some patch recipients are permitted to be presented with patches whose visibility is "limited."

22. (Original) A selection system in accordance with claim 15 wherein at least one condition to be satisfied by presented patches is availability to a given class of patch recipients, where a recipient is a human or machine in a position to select and install patches on a given computer system.

23. (Previously Presented) A selection system in accordance with claim 22 wherein the availability of any patch is either "all" or "limited" or their equivalents.

24. (Original) A selection system in accordance with claim 23 wherein only some patch recipients are permitted to be presented with patches whose availability is "limited."

25. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented patch selection system ~~in accordance with claim 15~~ for aiding in the selection of program patches for installation into a computer system, where the patches are organized into patch trees each having a root, the system comprising:

a patch search mechanism which can search for and find an identifier for one or more patches that correct a particular defect or that have a particular property or both;

a patch tree examination mechanism which can examine patches identified by the search mechanism and additional patches, if any, sharing the same patch tree as any patch whose identifier is found by the search mechanism and occupying a position on the shared patch tree between the position of any patch whose identifier is found and the root of the shared patch tree; and

a patch presentation mechanism which can present one or more patches, including patches whose identifiers are found by the search mechanism and/or additional examined patches, said patches presented being those that the examination mechanism determines satisfy one or more specified conditions determined by the nature of each patch, said specified conditions being determined by characteristics or requirements or both of the computer system where the patches are to be installed,

wherein at least two specified conditions to be satisfied by presented patches are reliability adequate to the needs of a given computer system and visibility to a given class of patch recipients, where a recipient is a human or machine in a position to select and install patches on a given computer system.

26. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented patch selection system ~~in accordance with claim 15~~ for aiding in the selection of program patches for installation into a computer system, where the patches are organized into patch trees each having a root, the system comprising:

a patch search mechanism which can search for and find an identifier for one or more patches that correct a particular defect or that have a particular property or both;

a patch tree examination mechanism which can examine patches identified by the search mechanism and additional patches, if any, sharing the same patch tree as any patch whose identifier is found by the search mechanism and occupying a position on the shared patch tree between the position of any patch whose identifier is found and the root of the shared patch tree; and

a patch presentation mechanism which can present one or more patches, including patches whose identifiers are found by the search mechanism and/or additional examined patches, said patches presented being those that the examination mechanism determines satisfy one or more specified conditions determined by the nature of each patch, said specified conditions being determined by characteristics or requirements or both of the computer system where the patches are to be installed,

wherein at least two specified conditions to be satisfied by presented patches are reliability adequate to the needs of a given computer system and availability to a given class patch recipients, where a recipient is a human or machine in a position to select and install patches on a given computer system.

27. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented patch selection system ~~in accordance with claim 15~~ for aiding in the selection of program patches for installation into a computer system, where the patches are organized into patch trees each having a root, the system comprising:

a patch search mechanism which can search for and find an identifier for one or more patches that correct a particular defect or that have a particular property or both;

a patch tree examination mechanism which can examine patches identified by the search mechanism and additional patches, if any, sharing the same patch tree as any patch whose identifier is found by the search mechanism and occupying a position on the shared patch tree between the position of any patch whose identifier is found and the root of the shared patch tree; and

a patch presentation mechanism which can present one or more patches, including patches whose identifiers are found by the search mechanism and/or additional examined patches, said patches presented being those that the examination mechanism determines satisfy one or more specified conditions determined by the nature of each patch, said specified conditions being determined by characteristics or requirements or both of the computer system where the patches are to be installed,

wherein at least two specified conditions to be satisfied by presented patches are visibility and availability to given classes of patch recipients, where a recipient is a human or machine in a position to select and install patches on a given computer system.

28. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented patch selection system ~~in accordance with claim 15~~ for aiding in the selection of program patches for installation into a computer system, where the patches are organized into patch trees each having a root, the system comprising:

a patch search mechanism which can search for and find an identifier for one or more patches that correct a particular defect or that have a particular property or both;

a patch tree examination mechanism which can examine patches identified by the search mechanism and additional patches, if any, sharing the same patch tree as any patch whose identifier is found by the search mechanism and occupying a position on the shared patch tree between the position of any patch whose identifier is found and the root of the shared patch tree; and

a patch presentation mechanism which can present one or more patches, including patches whose identifiers are found by the search mechanism and/or additional examined patches, said patches presented being those that the examination mechanism determines satisfy one or more specified conditions determined by the nature of each patch, said specified conditions being determined by characteristics or requirements or both of the computer system where the patches are to be installed,

wherein at least three specified conditions to be satisfied by presented patches are reliability adequate to the needs of a given computer system, visibility to a given class of

patch recipients, and availability to a given class of patch recipients, where a recipient is a human or machine in a position to select and install patches on a given computer system.